Harriman Is Dissenter On State Travel Policy

Post 4/9/66

Ambassador-at-large W. Averell Harriman took a fraternal poke yesterday at his State Department colleagues on the issue of freedom to travel.

"Don't imitate the enemy," Harriman said in a luncheon address, with a friendly but pointed glance toward Leonard C. Meeker, State Department Legal Adviser, seated near him. The Department has asked Congress for statutory authority to enforce certain travel restrictions.

Harriman, who sometimes startles fellow bureaucrats by saying what is on his mind, gave a review of world affairs to the District of Columbia Chapter of the Federal Bar Association at the National Press Club.

In 1959, Harriman recalled, he enlisted the aid of former Secretary of State Dean Acheson to obtain permission for Harriman to travel to Communist China. But Peking then declined to admit him.

Freedom to travel is one of the yearnings that is pressing upon Communist regimes, he said. The United States, said Harriman, should do everything to encourage this freedom, instead of applying restrictions of its own.